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HOUSE COUNCIL PASSES COMPREHENSIVE BACKGROUND SCREENING PROTECTIONS FOR VULNERABLE FLORIDIANS

TALLAHASSEE – The House Policy Council today passed House Bill (HB) 7069 by Representative William Snyder (R-Stuart). The legislation will close loopholes in the background screening process to help keep criminals and predators away from Florida’s most vulnerable citizens.

“The main role of government is to protect the most vulnerable among us. Floridians recognize this fact and expect that their loved ones will be safe and treated with dignity, respect and compassion,” said Representative Snyder. “This legislation represents a significant step in enhancing protections for populations that are easily victimized.”

HB 7069 increases protections for vulnerable Floridians. The protections included in the legislation provide that no one can begin work with children, disabled adults or adults over 65 years of age until after a background screening is completed and the applicant is found to be qualified. Any exemptions for prior offenses cannot be made for at least three years following all sentencing sanctions, and any exemptions that are made can only be approved by the agency head. More importantly, the legislation provides that sexual predators will never receive an exemption to work with vulnerable populations.

The legislation now moves to the Full Appropriations Council on Education & Economic Development.

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